

Cautious New Hint That Castro Knew of JFK Plot

Washington

The House assassinations committee, in a cautiously worded statement, said yesterday it has been told there may be some support for a report that Fidel Castro knew in advance of an assassination threat against President John F. Kennedy.

Castro has called the report "absurd."

Louis Stokes (Dem-Ohio), the committee's chairman, refused to go beyond an ambiguous statement that said an unspecified source had informed the panel that the story might have substance.

And Stokes and committee chief counsel G. Robert Blakey stressed that the committee itself was not vouching for the truthfulness of the report, only passing on the opinion of the unnamed source.

Blakey's statement said the

story was written by Comer Clark in the tabloid National Enquirer. The story said the Cuban consulate in Mexico City told Castro that Lee Harvey Oswald had threatened Kennedy's life.

Blakey said the committee investigated the writer's reputation for truthfulness and "frankly, it was not good."

But Blakey said the committee did not ignore the story because of the information that it was supported by reliable government sources.

The committee's prepared statement said it "has been informed that the substance of the story is supported by highly confidential, but reliable, sources available to the U.S. government."

The committee issued the statement as it released an interview with the Cuban president in which Castro vehemently denied the report.

"This is absurd," the committee quoted Castro as saying in the interview. "It has been invented from beginning to end.

"It would have been our moral duty to inform the United States," Castro said.

Castro, two former Cuban consuls in Mexico City and a consulate secretary all denied in statements or testimony to the committee that Oswald made the threat when he tried to get a visa for entry into Cuba.

Former Consul Alfredo Mirabal Diaz said the story is "completely absurd. It is completely false. It is a lie." And former Consul Eusebio Azcue Lopez said Oswald was angry and discourteous but made no assassination threat against Cuba.

Earlier yesterday, Azcue said he believes a man who identified himself as Lee Harvey Oswald and angrily demanded a visa for Cuba



AP Wirephoto

EUSEBIO AZCUE LOPEZ Former Cuban official

In 1963 was not the same man named later as John F. Kennedy's assassin.

But Azcue, now retired, told the committee he could be persuaded he was wrong by compelling evidence. Committee sources said such evidence is forthcoming.

Associated Press